



The Board of Park and Recreation Commissioners of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, met at the Tyvola Senior Center located at 2225 Tyvola Road, Charlotte, NC, on April 14, 2015 at 6 p.m.

PRC MINUTES April 14, 2015

ATTENDANCE

PRC Present:

Elaine Powell, Chair
 Kendal Bryant, Vice-Chair
 Tristan McMannis, Executive Secretary
 Norman Mitchell
 Jude Harding
 Sheryl Smith
 Doug Burnett
 Charlie McRee
 Ed Barnhart
 Jim Garges
 Michael Kirschman

PRC Absent:

Brenda McMoore
 Aubin Guinness
 Vacant – At Large
 Vacant – South (S3)

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 6 p.m. by Chair Elaine Powell, which was followed by the pledge of allegiance.

Welcome and Introductions:

Each of the Park and Recreation Commissioners introduced themselves and the park regions they represent. Terri Stowers, Division Director of Community and Recreation Center Services, welcomed the Commission to the Tyvola Sr. Center and introduced, **Trena Palmer**, Manager over senior programming. Terri also introduced **Al Bangoura**, the new Superintendent of Community and Recreation Center Services. Al came to the Department from Minneapolis Parks and Recreation.

Proclamations and Awards:

Program/Staff Presentations: Community and Recreation Center Services

Serving Active Older Adults in Mecklenburg County: This presentation shared the growing need for senior services in Mecklenburg County and what the Department is doing to address those needs. The presentation covered the following:

- The increase of residents in Mecklenburg County over the age of 65 from 250,483 in 2013 to a predicted 553,189 by 2033
- Services to seniors among the 18 traditional recreation centers in the Department have increased from 25,000 in 2010 to 48,000 in 2014. Programs include:
 - NC Association of Senior Citizen Clubs
 - Day trips and “See Charlotte” trips
 - Social activities including card games, computer classes, fitness classes
 - Participation in the DSS Senior Nutrition Program at Southview, Mallard Creek and Bette Rae Thomas recreation centers
- Home to the Korean Senior Center at Arbor Glenn
- Participation in the Senior Games and the Silver Arts
- Merger with the Charlotte Mecklenburg Senior Centers, which brought into the Department knowledgeable staff, broader senior programming and two senior centers of excellence. Expanded opportunities for seniors through this merger include:
 - Education and social opportunities
 - Cancer survivor groups
 - Financial planning
 - Knitting, crochet, sewing, quilting and art
 - Foreign language and computer classes
 - Dancing
 - Health and wellness programs including
 - A health suite at Tyvola
 - Health fairs
 - Monthly health screenings
 - Exercise classes
 - Education seminars
 - Personal training
 - Nutrition counseling
 - Fitness walking
 - Massage therapy
 - Counseling and Workshops
 - Medicare
 - AARP driver safety
 - Diabetes and Alzheimer’s supports groups
 - Legal services
 - Multi-cultural programs at the Shamrock Sr. Center
 - Increased participation at the North Mecklenburg Sr. Center from under 200 participates to over 400 since the merger.
- Future plans for senior programming in the Department include:
 - Taking responsibility for the Charlotte Mecklenburg Senior Games
 - Increase DSS senior nutrition programs in the recreation centers
 - Budget enhancement to improve senior services at Southview, Mallard Creek and Bette Rae Thomas

- Senior needs study in conjunction with the Health Department and DSS to plan how Mecklenburg County is going to address senior needs.

Following the presentation questions and discussion addressed the following:

Senior Games: A month long event beginning the first Saturday in May.

North Mecklenburg Sr. Center: Located in the old Huntersville police station, they are at capacity in programming and space. The future North Regional Recreation Center (2019 or 2020) will address many of the demands for senior programming and senior needs in the north.

DSS Senior Nutrition Sites: A tour to evaluate other possible recreation center nutrition sites will include Naomi Drenan, Ivory Baker, Albemarle Road and Elon.

Appointments – Advisory Council – Applicants

Greenway: **Motion was made** by Commissioner Barnhart to appoint **Rick Winiker** to an unexpired term on the Greenway Advisory Council, expiring 6/2015, which was seconded by Commissioner McRee and approved unanimously.

North: **Motion was made** by Commissioner Bryant to appoint **Jeff Presson** to an unexpired term on the North Advisory Council, expiring 6/2015, which was seconded by Commissioner Smith and approved unanimously.

Public Hearings: - Naming of County Park Property

Director's Report

Director Garges reported on the FY16 budget process and reminded the Commission that June 10 is the date of the budget public hearing and encouraged the PRC to attend. Jim also shared that he would be attending a budget retreat with the County Manager's executive team and all department heads on April 20 and 21 to present the Department's budget request. Many of the Department's ask this year are based on a 3-year approach to funding as opposed to a single year budget request. Jim discussed the following budget topics:

- **Deferred Maintenance** - New calculations in preparing the 2014 update of the 10-Year Comprehensive Park Master Plan indicate an immediate deferred maintenance cost of \$18.5M for park structures and amenities. In addition to this deferred maintenance backlog, the calculations also revealed an ongoing deferred maintenance need of approximately \$3.5M per year. The estimated cost over the next ten (10) years is over \$50M. An option for funding is to look at any upcoming park capital improvement projects that also have deferred maintenance needs and considered adding the deferred maintenance cost to the capital budget for those projects.
- **Operational Needs Assessment** - In FY 2016 the Department will be opening five new facilities including First Ward Park, Double Oaks Pool, Berewick Regional Park, Reid Neighborhood Park and Ramsey Creek Beach. Additionally, the renovated Aquatic Center/Second Ward Gym will open in June 2016. Expenses for these facilities total \$1.1M.

- **Park Operations and Repair 3-Year Funding Plan** - In FY2015, the need for a multi-year funding concept was presented and a total of \$1.5M was approved to include 19 positions, staff vehicles and equipment. Based on the original Operations and Maintenance proposal, the second year funding (FY2016) is \$3.1M, which includes a substantial amount for contract services and supplies, 28 positions, staff vehicles and equipment. The Department is requesting the approval of the second phase of the plan; the third and final phase (FY2017) of the plan is approximately \$2M. The estimated annualized cost of the full funding of the 3-Year Plan is approximately \$6M, excluding staff vehicles and equipment.
- **Existing Services Enhancements** - Several needs exist for seven (7) new positions to support existing services such as Facilities Planning, Budget/Strategic Planning and two IT Analyst positions to fully support ActiveNet. In addition, one position is requested for Community Recreation to focus on at-risk youth which was lost during the recession and two Environmental Educators to increase outdoor recreation/environmental education programs. Funding enhancement is also requested in contracted services, supplies and materials for Grady Cole/Memorial Stadium, Special Events and a semi-annual publication of the "Get Going Guide". The total of these requests is \$841K.
- **Senior Services Enhancement** - To expand senior programming and services, the Department is recommending the relocation of existing operations at the Shamrock Senior Center located on the Aldersgate property to the Methodist Home Recreation Center and expand the activities to include multi-generational fitness and wellness programming; building renovations are estimated at \$300,000. In addition, the Department is also requesting approval to expand multi-generational programs in senior fitness and wellness at three other Recreation Centers (Southview, Mallard Creek, and Bette Rae Thomas) that are now used by DSS for Senior Nutrition Programs. The total estimated cost to expand these services is \$425,000 for two (2) full time Administrative Assistants, six (6) regular part time employees, program supplies and \$75K funding for a comprehensive strategic and annual action plan.
- **Marketing Initiative** - The Department recently completed a marketing analysis which clearly outlines the need and benefits of restoring marketing efforts to the Department. Three key Department goals can be directly impacted - Increase public awareness, increase citizen program participation to 30% and increase cost recovery to 35%.
- **Achieve 225** - Is a joint fitness initiative with the Health Dept. (Chronic Disease Prevention Program), CMS and Park and Recreation. The physical activity model has been developed to ensure all elementary students receive at least 30-45 minutes of daily moderate to vigorous physical activity; or 225 minutes each week. Childhood obesity continues to be a huge health problem and is not being adequately addressed. The Department requested funding for the program at \$1.3M of which \$250,000 would be incurred by Department and the remainder by CMS. At this time, it does not look as if this is a current budget priority by CMS.

Commissioner McMannis asked the age of the students currently in the Achieve 225 program and for the rationale behind classes that did not have recess opportunity. Jim responded that the program is for elementary schools and that recess and physical fitness opportunities are at the discretion of the principal and often based on the school's performance. The principal may feel that being in the classroom is more important. Jim pointed out that Achieve 225 is a grant program that is currently in 30 of the elementary schools and is a proven model for improving the fitness and performance of students. The grant for this program is going to sunset out and CMS does not plan to pick up the program. However, the Department will continue to explore ways to partner with CMS to provide structured physical activity in the elementary schools. While funding for the program is an issue, Chair Powell and Commissioner Burnett felt it is important to get buy in for the program from the teachers and the parents. An option might be to advocate to parent/teacher organizations and to simply support the importance of children's health when speaking with elected officials, friends and neighbors.

- **Green Team** – This summer the Department has expanded the Mayor's Summer Youth Program to include a 30 member teen crew to work directly in the parks on maintenance and beautification. This program provides an opportunity for teens to work, learn and earn an income. The program will be funded this year from lapse salaries.
- **Land Acquisition** - It is likely the remainder of the FY15 land acquisition funds will be spent before July 15. Given the pace we are trying to keep, size of the properties and per acre cost, the Department would like to request more funds be allocated in FY16. If this is not possible consideration for additional funds on a per acquisition basis will be requested.
- **Greenway Dedicated Fund** – In order to achieve a goal of 50 miles by 2020 the Department would like to have a dedicated funding cycle for greenways, much like the funding cycle for land acquisition. This would insure that greenway planning and construction never stops. The Department would need approximately \$39M available in a dedicated reserve to be funded over the next five years in addition to the \$40M already funded for Greenway land acquisition and construction. Greenways is the number one citizen request.

May 12 PRC Meeting: The May PRC meeting will start with a picnic at Midtown Park followed by a short meeting and then the opportunity to take a bike tour or walking tour of Little Sugar Creek Greenway. Please arrive between 5:30 and 6:00 p.m. Rain location will be Mahlon Adams Pavilion at Freedom Park.

PRC Chair Report

Chair Powell discussed the following:

- **NRPA Pillars:** As champions of Park and Recreation, Chair Powell reminded the Commission that the three pillars of the National Recreation and Park Association are

conservation, social equity and health and wellness and urged everyone to keep these focus areas in mind as they advocate for Park and Recreation.

- **Championship Activity:** Chair Powell recognized the following championship activities:
 - Commissioners Smith and Harding met with Commissioner Leake to advocate for Park and Recreation. It was a very good meeting and Commissioner Leake, a strong supporter of Park and Recreation, encouraged them to be proactive in representing the people of Mecklenburg County and to remember they are the voice for those who cannot speak. Commissioner Harding met with Commissioner Puckett, also a good and informative meeting.
 - Commissioner Bryant has agreed to represent the PRC as an ex-officio member of Partners for Parks
- **PRC Annual Report to the BOCC:** Chair Powell reminded all of the Commissioners to provide her with their input for the upcoming PRC annual report to the BOCC. All were encouraged to attend. (**Note: This meeting was originally scheduled for May 5 but has been changed to May 19.**)

Consent Items

Motion was made by Commissioner McRee to approve all consent items, including the PRC minutes of March 10, 2015, which was seconded by Commissioner Harding and approved unanimously.

PRC Reports and Requests

The Park and Recreation Commissioner reported on the following:

Commissioner Bryant: The annual **Hat's off to Parks** event will be held on May 1st at Romare Bearden. Everyone was encouraged to attend. The **North Advisory Council Tour** was April 11th and led by North Region Manager, **Chris Hunter**, who did a wonderful job and made the tour a special event. Lori Saylor with Volunteer Services is working with **Wells Fargo** for an upcoming **Day of Caring** volunteer event.

Commissioner Powell: Commissioner Powell spoke at the **Tobacco Free Park Kick-off** which was held on March 18 at noon in Marshall Park. The event, while lightly attended, went well. Commissioner Powell also shared that she would be participating in one of Park and Recreation's environmental education programs on April 24 at the **Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge** in Charleston, SC.

Commissioner McMannis: Attended the **Matthews** advisory council meeting. Reported that **Pineville** recently applied for a PARTF grant for a sprayground.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.